

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3808

S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 8179

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS FROM AMBASSADOR HILL

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XM

SUBJECT: SUGGESTIONS FOR BETTERING RELATIONS WITHIN LATIN
AMERICA WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON ARGENTINA

REF: STATE 282526

1. AS INDICATED IN THE RECENT CASP, THE TURMOIL AND
UNCERTAINTY THROUGH WHICH ARGENTINA IS NOW PASSING
DICTATE A LOW US PROFILE. IT IS NOT A GOOD TIME FOR
MAJOR INITIATIVES IN US ARGENTINE RELATIONS. WE ARE
IN SOMETHING OF A HOLDING PATTERN UNTIL WE CAN FORESEE
THE LIKELY OUTCOME OF EVENTS HERE. THIS HOLDING ACTION,
HOWEVER, DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE SHOULD SIMPLY WRITE ARGENTINA
OFF. IT IS A COUNTRY WITH GREAT POTENTIAL, AND COULD
BE AN ENORMOUS BREAD BASKET IF ITS RESOURCES
WERE PROPERLY UTILIZED. I WOULD THEREFORE URGE THAT THE
WORKING GROUPS IN WASHINGTON AND HERE SHOULD GO FORWARD.
WE SHOULD, FOR EXAMPLE, CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARD
EXPANSION OF US-ARGENTINE TRADE, WITH OUR PRINCIPAL
EFFORTS FOCUSED IN THESE WORKING GROUPS.

2. IN ANY CASE WE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT GIVE THE
ARGENTINES THE IMPRESSION THAT BECAUSE OF THEIR
ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS, WE NO LONGER COUNT
THEM AMONG THE IMPORTANT, OR KEY, COUNTRIES OF LATIN
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AMERICA.

3. ONE POSITIVE ACTIONWE COULD TAKE WOULD BE TO EXPAND THE FLOW OF VISITORS IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. MANY ARGENTINES IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS KNOW ALL TOO LITTLE ABOUT THE US. WE SHOULD THEREFORE ENCOURAGE MORE HIGH-LEVEL VISITORS FROM ARGENTINA AND EXPAND OUR EXCHANGE PROGRAM GENERALLY. AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME, MOREOVER, I WOULD HOPE WE COULD ENCOURAGE THE EXCHANGE OF CONGRESSIONAL VISITS FROM BOTH HOUSES.

4. FINALLY, WITH RESPECT TO THE REST OF THE HEMISPHERE AS WELL AS TO ARGENTINA, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT WE BEGIN NOW TO MAP OUT A SERIES OF PRESIDENTIAL VISITS AS WELL AS VISITS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE, SECRETARY OF TREASURY, AND PERHAPS OTHER CABINET OFFICERS. THESE NEED NOT TAKE PLACE IMMEDIATELY BUT SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PLANNED AND SPACED OVER THE FOUR YEAR PRESIDENTIAL TERM.

HILL

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